



Plans focus on stopping kids from dropping out

One proposal would put \$3 million toward keeping kids in school.

By TERESA MCMINN
For the Daily Record/Sunday News

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From 1998 to 2008, 6,429 students dropped out of York County schools. The United Way of York County and YorkCounts plan to change those statistics for the better.

Bob Woods, executive director of the United Way of York County, talked at YorkCounts' annual summit Friday about a recommendation from Metro-York, a project undertaken by YorkCounts, that \$3 million be invested over the next 10 years in programs proven to reduce the risk of kids quitting school.

Also, money has been raised to create a model of Communities That Care that will focus on keeping York County kids in school, said Woods, a YorkCounts board member.

High school dropouts are more likely to end up in prison, he said, and added that the cost to incarcerate someone in York County is three times as much as the price to educate them.

"We are paying a significant amount of money for our inability to reach these kids," he said.

"Education is definitely the key to success."

That information doesn't surprise William Penn Senior High School sophomore Jaquell Dewberry, 15. Nor do the dropout rates across the county.

Jaquell, who received a YorkCounts award for his illustration of how the community can rally to help those in need, said more emphasis should be placed on helping a kid succeed. A lot can be learned from example, he said.

"Everyone has a future," said Jaquell, who plans to pursue a career in medical engineering. He also said he hopes to one day open a youth center that would teach troubled kids use art as a positive and healthy outlet for self expression.

"I have good teachers that showed me support," he said. "So I try to support others."

And that underlying message was echoed throughout Friday's summit.

YorkCounts wants to influence more local students to want to succeed, said the organization's director, James DeBord.

"It's a win for the county," he said.

2010 YORKCOUNTS AWARD WINNERS

The list was announced the group's annual summit Friday at Penn State York's Pullo Family Performing Arts Center in Spring Garden Township:

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--- Regional Leadership Award -- Northeastern Regional Police Commission

--- Outstanding Organizational Support Awards -- PeoplesBank; Stock and Leader

--- Outstanding Community Volunteerism Award -- Mike Smith

--- Volunteer of the Year Award -- Larry Miller

Winners of the 2010 YorkCounts "What Makes York County One Great Community" Art and Essay Contest:

--- Elementary -- Kirsten E. Arcarese, 6th grade, North Salem Elementary School, essay

--- Middle School -- Adin M. Brubaker, 8th grade, Logos Academy, essay

--- High School -- Jaquell Dewberry, 10th grade, William Penn Senior High School, illustration

Also recognized for their work with YorkCounts were Eric Menzer and Bill Simpson.

To learn more, visit www.yorkcounts.org/ and www.unitedway-york.org/

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